

# THE STATUS REPORT

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## MassGAP Inaugural Meeting a Success

Despite sweltering temperatures and the recent Big Dig tunnel tragedy, nearly 100 women gathered for the kick off of the 2006 MassGAP Initiative on Tuesday, July 18th. The initiative is being led by the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus (MWPC) in collaboration with many partners, including the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW). The MCSW sits on the project's steering committee along with Beth Boland of Bingham McCutchen.

The Massachusetts Government Appointments Project (MassGAP) was founded in 2002 with the goal of increasing the number of women appointed to high-level state government positions. It had great success after the election of Governor Romney, as 42% of his new gubernatorial appointments were women.

The 2006 effort aims to have an even greater impact. The purpose of the inaugural meeting was to familiarize attendees with the project and to garner support that will be greatly needed in the months ahead. The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women is proud to be a member of the Steering Committee and has extended its full support to the project.

Liz Levin, Chair of the 2002 and 2006 MassGAP projects emceed and provided a vision of the project. Mary Fifield, President of the MWPC Board of Directors, articulated how attendees could help the project. Jesse Mermell, executive director of the MWPC, explained the "nuts and bolts" of the project, while Beverly Edgehill, President and CEO of The Partnership, Inc. announced her organization's support of MassGAP and asked for more women of color to participate.

Two women who benefited from MassGAP 2002 shared their stories. Governor Romney appointed Luisa Paiewonsky to the position of Commissioner of the Massachusetts Highway Department in June 2005. She says that she never considered the position despite many years of service in the field because she was not "political" and believes that her promotion was due in large part to the support lent by MassGAP.

Also in attendance was Anne L. Collins, the Registrar of the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV). Like Ms. Paiewonsky, Ms. Collins had spent many years working for the RMV and never considered the position of Registrar until MassGAP included her resume in the book of resumes that was presented to the Romney administration.



*Pictured above, left to right, Jesse Mermell, Executive Director, MA Women's Political Caucus (MWPC); Liz Levin, Chair MassGAP 2002 & 2006; Mary Fifield, President MWPC; Beth Boland, Partner, Bingham McCutchen, LLP; and Linda Brantley, Executive Director, MA Commission on the Status of Women*



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## Executive Director Corner

If you're like me, you live all year for summer in New England. The sun, the beach, swimming, golfing, biking, the flowers, fresh garden vegetables, warm nights on the porch...there's just no reason to go anywhere else. Yet each July I find myself reluctantly being pulled away to attend the annual National Association of Commissions on Women convention. Don't get me wrong - I feel very fortunate to be able to attend, it's just leaving our slice of heaven on earth to go off to say...Nebraska. Unlike some other professions, NACW does not choose the most glamorous of destinations to hold its gatherings. But what it may lack in location it certainly makes up for in content, connections and learning. As the commercial says, ultimately the experience is...priceless.

What one learns attending these meetings is that women's commissions come in all sizes, shapes and configurations. There are small, completely volunteer based organizations, giant ones with budgets to match and everything in between. There are township, city, county, and state commissions with appointing authorities that run the gamut. Yet given this, there are many, many similarities. Most are being led or served by women who are passionately committed to making a difference, both for the women of their region and the women of the world. We care about many of the same things - pay equity, paid family leave, women's economic empowerment, seeing more women at the table and in positions of political power and influence, preventative health care, more and better child care, women's financial literacy, helping new immigrants adjust to their new home, and on and on.

Meeting with these wonderfully devoted staff and Commissioners from across the country never fails to revitalize, reinvigorate and get the creative juices flowing. There is so much to be learned from those who have made this field their life's work, as well as from those who may have spent less time in the business but have come up with unique and interesting ways to accomplish great things for women. I always return from afar with great ideas that can work here in Massachusetts. And it's extremely helpful to hear and know that as Commissions, we share the same challenges and struggles and are able to exchange best practices on how to address them.

This year I return from the Convention having been elected to serve on the national board to represent the New England Region (along with my counterpart Terri deLangis, Executive Director of the New Hampshire CSW). I had no interest or intention of taking on this responsibility when I went to the conference, but when we realized that there was no one running from our region, we decided to step up to the plate and throw our names into the hat. We are committed to assisting the current leadership of the organization in sustaining and building on the tremendous success and steps forward that have been achieved in the past year. And we are also thrilled to be able to work toward having the NACW become more of a national advocate and adviser on issues that impact women. We serve to benefit all of you and I hope that if you have items that you would like the national board to consider, you will bring them to my attention.

Lastly, I return from Convention with two very tangible assets - ready made curriculums and outreach plans on financial literacy for women and osteoporosis. Through creative corporate partnerships with Proctor and Gamble and Citigroup, NACW is the recipient of these two products which provide everything one might need to conduct workshops, speaking engagements, trainings, press releases, etc. on the two topics. If you have an interest in either, please let me know and we will be happy to share our new resources.

## MCSW Executive Director Brantley Elected to NACW Board



*Linda Brantley*

The New England Women's Commissions now have TWO new voices on the National Association of Commissions for Women's (NACW) Board of Directors. MCSW Executive Director Linda Brantley and Terri deLangis of the New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women were elected by their peers to represent Region 1 - New England, for a 2-year term. The election took place at the NACW annual convention held July 19-22, in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Executive Director Brantley stated, "I am SO proud of the strides that NACW has taken forward in the past year and am committed to doing everything in my power to keep the momentum going." "I think this important linkage with the national organization will prove very beneficial to the work we are doing convening the women's commissions of Massachusetts and helping to develop more local commissions, as well as to the existing New England Women's Commission group," Brantley added.

One key collaborative activity is already underway - MCSW interns are updating NACW's very dated "How to Create a Commission on Women" manual. The end result will be turned over to NACW to assist its many member Commissions across the United States. And, as part of the MCSW's mandate is to promote the establishment of women's commissions, the MCSW will utilize a Massachusetts tailored version to assist those who are interested in creating local or county women's commissions. To reserve a copy, call the MCSW @ (617) 626-6520.

**MassGAP continued from Pg. 1**

**MassGAP 2006 Scope of Work:** The work will take place over the course of two years, and will:

- Work with the Democratic and Republican gubernatorial candidates in the general election to secure their commitment to fair representation of women in the top positions of their administration
- Advertise the program statewide in order to create a rich pool of prospective hires
- Collect resumes statewide, which the MassGAP 2006 Task Forces (Administration and Finance, Environment, Education, Public Safety, Transportation, et al.) will evaluate and cull the very best for the governor's consideration
- Make formal recommendations to the administration
- Monitor the administration's progress during the course of its existence to assure that as positions open up, MassGAP-recommended women are considered for them.

It was announced that the New England Women in Real Estate (NEWIRE) and the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) had extended their support of the project by donating \$2,500 each.

MassGAP is currently reaching out to women's organizations to participate and support the 2006 MassGAP initiative. Organizations may become an Organizational Sponsor, or become a member of the Steering Committee. If you are interested in supporting the project, or submitting your resume, contact the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus online at (617) 451-9294, or visit [www.mwpc.org](http://www.mwpc.org).

*Did You Know...*

*Thirty years ago, one little law, Title IX, made positive changes for women and their status in the locker room, classroom & boardroom.*

*However, Title IX is now in danger.*

*Read next month's issue of **The Status Report** to learn more about the threat to Title IX and how you can help!*

**MCSW CALL TO ACTION!!**

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women is preparing the imminent launch of the  
**MASSACHUSETTS WOMEN'S RESOURCE & REFERRAL NETWORK**

The network is an interactive online database that will put information, services, agencies, and organizations that Massachusetts women and their families need at their fingertips! We need your help in identifying local service providers and women's organizations to include in the network.

Make sure your organization is represented.

Enter your organizations information directly at

[www.mass.gov/women/addmyorg.htm](http://www.mass.gov/women/addmyorg.htm)

or call us at 617-626-6520



## Commission Corner

### *Commissioner Grant Elected to COPLAC Board*



*Mary Grant, PhD*

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts President Mary K. Grant was elected this month to a one-year term as chair of the Massachusetts State College Council of Presidents, beginning June 2006.

Grant also recently was nominated to head up a national organization, the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC), as that board's nominating committee of presidents asked her to serve as its chair. That appointment begins the following year, from June 2007-2008.

The chair of the State College Council of Presidents is the point person in the development and communication of the state college legislative, public policy and public relations agenda for the state colleges of Massachusetts, said Frederick Clark, executive officer for the organization. The Council represents the nine state colleges and the 45,000 students who attend them. "The State College Presidents are thrilled to have elected President Mary Grant to serve in that capacity," Clark said. They are excited about the level

of enthusiasm, energy and dedication President Grant brings not only to Mass. College of Liberal Arts, but to the state colleges and public higher education as a whole."

Grant said she considered the position of chair for the State College Council of Presidents both an opportunity and a responsibility. She added that the role would provide a chance to promote MCLA while continuing to advance the important work done by all the state colleges.

"I think it's going to be a challenging year, with everything from state budget issues to a change in leadership of the Board of Higher Education," Grant said. Chancellor Judith I. Gill will step down from the Board in September. "And we'll have a new governor elected, so I think it's going to be an interesting and important year for the state colleges and for public higher education."

### *MCSW's Summer Reading List*

Looking for some good beach reading this summer? The MCSW recommends the following:

#### **Getting Even: Why Women Don't Get Paid Like Men and What To Do About It**

By Evelyn Murphy, President of the WAGE Project, Inc., a national organization to end wage discrimination against working women, and Resident Scholar in the Women's Studies Research Center at Brandeis University.

#### **Ending the Gauntlet: Removing Barriers to Women's Success in the Law**

By Lauren Stiller Rikleen, a senior partner in the Real Estate and Environmental Law Group of Bowditch & Dewey. Lauren has a diverse environmental law practice emphasizing negotiation, enforcement and compliance issues.

#### **Unfinished Work: Building Equality and Democracy in an Era of Working Families**

Edited By Jody Heymann and Christopher Beem, Addresses how families have changed over the years, and the need to develop institutions to replace the former arrangements, thereby bettering the condition of America's children, families, and neighborhoods.

#### **Founding Sisters and the Nineteenth Amendment**

By Eleanor Clift, This volume relives the dramatic events, which led to the most significant key in women's history: the passing of the 19th Amendment on August 26, 1920, which finally granted women the right to vote.

All volumes are available from the MCSW's lending library. Anyone wishing to access the nearly 400 volumes should contact Darlene Kelter @ (617) 626-6520 to arrange a visit to peruse the collection. A complete list of available titles in the lending library is posted on the MCSW Web site [www.mass.gov/women](http://www.mass.gov/women).



## MCSW Legislative Update

The formal 2005-2006 legislative session ended July 31. As usual, this session included several successes on MCSW-endorsed bills, a very disappointing near miss and a variety of bills being referred for study (which means they die in this session and will need to be refiled in the next session.) We are proud of our role in helping to secure passage of the ones that succeeded and can recommit to fighting harder the next time around on the others.

Some action is still urgently needed: Early Education and Care, which the MCSW first endorsed in 2002, was returned to the Executive Office for reconsideration on Wednesday, July 26 after the Massachusetts Legislature rejected Governor Romney's amendments to enact the bill. The Governor's amendments included the elimination of the Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program. We urge you to call Governor Romney and Lt. Governor Healey at 617-725-4005 to ask them to sign this critical legislation immediately.

### Synopsis of other MCSW endorsed legislation follows:

#### PASSED:

- **Indexing the Minimum Wage** was enacted on July 31, 2006. The minimum wage in Massachusetts will rise to \$7.50 cents an hour on Jan. 1, 2007 and \$8 an hour Jan. 1, 2008.
- **An Act to Provide Timely Access to Emergency Contraception** was enacted on May 25, 2005. This legislation will require hospital emergency rooms to make emergency contraception available to rape survivors and will also allow pharmacists to dispense emergency contraception through a collaborative agreement with a physician.

#### DIED:

- **Equitable Coverage in Annuities** passed in the House late last week, but unfortunately, and in spite of the best efforts of ourselves and other proponents, was not included for a vote on the Senate calendar in the last few days. Work to pass this bill has been ongoing for over a decade and obviously will continue a while longer.

#### REFERRED TO STUDY:

- **An Act to Establish Paid Sick Days**
- **An Act to Provide Health Education in Schools**
- **An Act to Provide for Study about Trafficking of Persons**
- **An Act to Establish a Special Commission to Investigate the Integration of Internal Human Rights Standards into Massachusetts State Law**
- **An Act Establishing a Sexual Assault and Stalking Protective Orders Act**
- **An Act Establishing a Campus Rape and Sexual Assault Prevention Advisory Council**

Bills for the next legislative session, the formal portion of which will run from January 2007 - July 2008, should be filed by early December 2006. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Jill Ashton, MCSW Outreach Coordinator @ (617) 626-6520.

### Save the Date! Wednesday, December 6, 2006 The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Massachusetts Conference for Women

The MCSW is pleased to once again be the lead partner on the second annual MA Conference for Women, to be held at the Boston Exhibition and Convention Center. This one-day event will feature more than 75 diverse and nationally recognized speakers leading seminars on topics such as health, personal finance, education, and more. Conference attendees, expected to outnumber 5,000 this year, will enjoy even more networking, education and inspiration.

Maya Angelou has been secured as a keynote speaker for this not-to-be missed event!

Online registration is now available at  
[www.maconferenceforwomen.org](http://www.maconferenceforwomen.org)



*Summer is quickly passing...  
Take time to STOP and enjoy it!*

## The MCSW Women's Research Collaborative

The second meeting of the MCSW Massachusetts Women's Research Collaborative (MWRC) will be held on August 24<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 - 11:30. The Collaborative was founded in December 2005, and consists of various universities and organizations conducting research on women's issues in Massachusetts. The Collaborative's ultimate goal is to provide a forum for dialogue and cooperation between these researchers and the individuals most likely to create change for women in the Commonwealth.

While the inaugural MWRC meeting laid the groundwork for the Collaborative, the second will revolve around a "Status of Massachusetts Women by County" report that details current information on various women's issues, from basic demographics and employment to political participation and reproductive health data. Over the past six months MCSW interns have created the report in conjunction with Molly Mead, a Lincoln Filene Professor at Tufts University, and several of her graduate students. It is hoped that the report will foster discussion at the meeting about the availability of data issues that need to be emphasized in the future and ways the data can be utilized to drive positive change.

"The scope of the *Status of Massachusetts Women* report can be broadened after hearing the input of fellow Collaborative members," noted Linda Brantley, Executive Director of the MCSW. "Through discussion we can hopefully improve the available research on women's issues, and in doing so improve the status of women throughout the Commonwealth."

Anyone interested in the Collaborative or the meeting should contact Jill Ashton, MCSW Outreach Coordinator (617) 626-6520.

## MWPC's 2006 Wonder Women Awards:

*Honoring young women who work tirelessly behind the scenes in the political and non-profit communities*

On Wednesday, July 12, the Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus hosted its annual Wonder Women Awards at Parris in Quincy Market. The awards are part of the MWPC's Young Professionals Series and aim to honor young women who work behind the scenes in the political arena as well as the non-profit community. This year's honorees were Kara Ahern, Megan Amundson, LaKay Cornell, and Ayanna Pressley.

**Kara Ahern** is the deputy campaign manager for finance and scheduling for the Healey-Hillman campaign. Before returning to Boston, Ms. Ahern worked in Washington, D.C. as Vice President Cheney's political director.

**Megan Amundson** is the legislative director for the Environmental League of Massachusetts. She is also the principal author, analyst, and advocate for the annual Green Budget, which provides yearly recommendations for the state's environmental budget.

**LaKay Cornell** is an activist for reproductive justice and women's political issues. In 2005, she co-founded the Boston Pro-Choice Happy Hour, a monthly networking event for pro-choice young professionals in the Boston area. She will attend Boston College Law School in the fall.

**Ayanna Pressley** is the Massachusetts Political Director for Senator John Kerry. She has worked in politics in many capacities and in many states since the age of 19. Ms. Pressley is dedicated to promoting women of color in the political forum.

**"I'm actually struck by the fact that it's now 20 years since Geraldine Ferraro." ~ Eleanor Clift**

(In 1984, Geraldine Ann Ferraro earned a place in history as the first woman vice-presidential candidate on a national party ticket.)

## Upcoming Noteworthy Events & Happenings

October 7, 2006 → Oprah comes to Boston For more information visit:  
<http://www.omagazine.info/oyou2/>

December 6, 2006 → Massachusetts Conference for Women For more information visit:  
<http://www.maconferenceforwomen.org>

For a complete listing of events please visit [www.mass.gov/women/upcoming.htm](http://www.mass.gov/women/upcoming.htm)



**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

**VISIT US AT:**

**[WWW.MASS.GOV/WOMEN](http://WWW.MASS.GOV/WOMEN)**

If you have an event that you would like added to our future newsletters, or Web site, please e-mail the information to:  
[Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us](mailto:Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us)

### Commission Officers & Members FY 2006

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